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SPEECH

OF

MR. BIDLACK, OF PENNSYLVANIA,

ON THE

PROPOSITION TO REDUCE THE DUTIES ON COAL AND IRON:

DELIVERED

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

MAY 1, 1844.

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On the motion of Mr. McKAY, the House resolved itself into Committee of the Whole on the state of the Union, (Mr. HOPKINS in the chair,) and resumed the consideration of the tariff bill.

Mr. BIDLACK resumed his speech, which he suspended yesterday for a motion to rise, observing that he should labor under much embarrassment, in consequence of the limit to which he must confine his remarks. If he had had sufficient time, he should have liked to have gone still further into the comparative merits of the law of 1842, and of the bill under consideration; but his time would not permit, and he should, therefore, more particularly speak of the coal and iron interest, which, in his State, was one of great importance. But he would first observe that, as a general rule, he would be disposed to tax the luxuries of life, and such articles as came in competition with domestic productions. He would so tax imports as to enable the domestic fabricator to compete with the foreign manufacturer, while neither was permitted to impose upon the consumer; and if other duties were necessary, he would impose them on the luxuries of life, admitting free of duty such articles as are of prime necessity, but not produced in this country.

After giving a passing notice to the remarks of the gentleman from Alabama, [Mr. BELSER,] in relation to the English corn laws, and the imposition of duties generally for the support of the army and navy of that country, he said this country, too, had to support an army and navy, for the protection of its citizens and their commerce. Of the importance of our commerce, some idea might be formed from the fact that there were paid to the British government duties on the importation of American produce, which, in the year 1839, amounted to upwards of \$26,000,000, and in 1840 to upwards of \$28,000,000.

Mr. B. here went into an estimate, to show that our exports were made up, in a great measure, by southern production, and that but a very small amount, in comparison, consisted of the avails of the agricultural industry of the northern, middle, or western States. What reason for complaint, sir,

(said he,) have our southern brethren on this score? In addition to this, England imposes upon their cotton, which forms their chief export, only a nominal duty; whereas, if a citizen of one of the grain-growing States desires to send a thousand barrels of flour to London or Liverpool, he will be met with a demand for \$2,800 duty, before he can exchange his cargo for their cotton, woollens, or other manufactures, which he can obtain at fair prices, and without paying duties at any of our own manufactories.

Suppose, sir, one of my constituents desires to send a cargo of coal or "black diamonds;" because, although I represent an agricultural district, rich, and for the most part, lovely as the sun ever shone on, yet we have no surplus grain or other productions, for the operations in coal and iron there, have made a market at the door of the farmer. He wishes, therefore, to send a load of coal, but you can't "send coals to Newcastle." What is to be done? Suppose he should exchange his coal at Baltimore for tobacco: now what will England charge him, as duty, on his tobacco? One thousand per cent., or \$1,000 on every \$100 of American cost. He must turn his enterprise in another direction, and endeavor to build up a market at home; and, sir, I am glad to discover our coal is going into all the Atlantic ports.

The Boston Atlas, of January 2, 1844, states that for 1843, there were imported into that city:

Flour, 610,964 barrels.

Coal, 117,451 tons, all but 4,000 tons being from Pennsylvania.

Corn, 1,540,306 bushels; of which 750,000 bushels went from the Chesapeake and Delaware waters.

In addition to the 117,451 tons sent to Boston, about 50,000 tons were sent to Providence, besides smaller amounts to Newport, Nantucket, and ten or a dozen other ports. I discover that gentlemen have but an imperfect notion of the importance of our coal operations. Some twelve or fourteen years ago I stopped for the night in the upper part of my district; at what is now called Carbondale. I stayed in a log-house—one of the only two there was in the place at that time.

Now, from Carbondale there is an amount of tonnage sent off, greater than all the foreign trade from Philadelphia. Four hundred ships, each carrying five hundred tons, to depart from the great port of New York in a year, would make no mean figure, in her column of commercial statistics. Yet so many tons go from a single town in Luzerne—Carbondale sends off more than two hundred thousand a year!

These operations alone, offered a home market for all the agricultural productions of the surrounding country, which is now fast improving; and in addition to this, the boats which transport the coal by way of the railroad, and Delaware and Hudson canal, to the Hudson, return often laden with flour and other productions of western New York, and from still further west.

This case is referred to merely as an example. There are other similar cases, not only in my district, but all over the whole of the six anthracite coal regions of the State, to say nothing of the bituminous fields which are more than equal to all the coal of England and Wales. From Carbondale a communication has been made to tide-water, on the Hudson, while from other portions of the coal of my district, railroads and canals have been made to the tide-waters of the Delaware and the Chesapeake.

From tide-water, at Havre de Grace, our coal, of course, may be transported in suitable vessels to Baltimore, Washington, Alexandria, Norfolk, Hartford, New London, Norwich, Newport, Providence, Nantucket, New Bedford, Boston, and, indeed, to all the eastern markets. There is a canal from the Chesapeake bay, piercing the valley on the line of the Susquehanna on the south. Second: The canal and railroad from the North river piercing the coal field at Carbondale. Third: The North Branch extension, coming down from the Genesee country, piercing the valley on the northwest. The noble works of the Mauch Chunk company, leading up from the cities of New York and Philadelphia, and entering the valley on the east. Avenues to market, it will be seen, will be abundant, to insure healthful competition, and an uninterrupted trade.

This competition, not only in this section, but in all the rest, will always continue. It has already reduced the price of coal, on the seaboard, more than 15 per cent., and will always continue a sure guaranty to the consumer against unfair prices.

There are, in the State of Pennsylvania, 2,250 miles of canal and railroads, at a cost of nearly \$80,000,000; perhaps about 300 miles are not in operation. Something like one-half of these improvements have been constructed by the State, and the other half by companies and individuals; a moiety of those made by the State, and the main portion of the residue, have been brought into existence for the purpose of developing the coal and iron interests of the State, which would have otherwise remained locked up in the interior. It has been estimated that the operations in iron, alone, give employment to about 20,000 hands, or laborers, having 100,000 souls dependent upon them, and consuming at least \$10,000,000 worth of our agricultural productions. From what investigation I have given the subject, I am inclined to this opinion, that the coal trade is becoming equal to, if not greater than, the iron. The gentleman from Ohio [Mr. WELLER] has taken a very contracted view of the importance of these iron and coal interests in Pennsylvania. He refers to the census to see how many are engaged in the mines, and how many in the furnaces, merely. He

makes no calculation of those engaged in making our thousand canal boats, and many thousand railroad cars, for the transportation of coal and iron, and those engaged in the transportation. But vast as the operations are, they are yet in their infancy, comparatively speaking.

One important consideration connected with these interests is, that of the vast amount in value produced in the articles of coal and iron, a considerable portion may be considered as created out of articles otherwise useless, and another portion is made up of labor and the consumption of agricultural productions. For example:

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
| In making iron, the ore and limestone used, would, were the manufacture abandoned, be of little comparative worth. In making 1,000 tons of pig metal, worth \$25,000, there would be used, |              |
| 2,500 tons of ore, worth in the bed  | - \$1,250 00 |
| 2,500 tons coal, worth in the bed  | - 1,250 00   |
| 1,000 tons limestone, worth in the bed   | - 500 00     |
|  | <hr/>        |
|  | \$3,000 00   |

So that the value of three thousand dollars of the 25,000, being of materials otherwise worthless, may be regarded as *created* by the manufacture.

Let us pursue this matter of iron a little further.

A ton of bar iron is worth in market \$75 00.

Of what is this composed? Let us see.

|   |   |   |          |
|---|---|---|----------|
| Two and a half tons ore   | - | - | - \$1 25 |
| Two and a half tons coal  | - | - | - 1 25   |
| Labor and provisions, (American, too,) to dig the ore and coal and deliver at furnace | - | - | -        |
| —5 tons, at \$2 00  | - | - | - 10 00  |
| Limestone   | - | - | - 1 50   |
|   |   |   | <hr/>    |
|   |   |   | 14 00    |
| Labor and provisions in smelting ore  | - | - | - 3 50   |
|   |   |   | <hr/>    |
| Cost of a ton of pig iron   | - | - | - 17 50  |
| Contingencies   | - | - | - 2 50   |
|   |   |   | <hr/>    |
|   |   |   | \$20 00  |

This would be one-third the cost of the bar iron.

|                                |   |   |         |
|--------------------------------|---|---|---------|
| Add two-thirds                 | - | - | - 40 00 |
|                                |   |   | <hr/>   |
|                                |   |   | 60 00   |
| Conveying to market and profit | - | - | - 15 00 |
|                                |   |   | <hr/>   |
|                                |   |   | \$75 00 |

Now the two-thirds or forty dollars addition consists chiefly of American labor, American coal, and American provisions.

The American farmer then feeds these workmen, and thus finds a domestic or home market for his produce. Is not then the farmer benefited and interested quite as much as the manufacturer? Labor constitutes a large item in the analysis.

Is not, then, the American laborer—the true-hearted working man—benefited?

But these workmen must have houses to live in—clothes to wear—so that they, in finding profitable employment, are able to pay the house carpenter, the tailor, the shoemaker. And more, the merchant comes in for his share of business. In the sale of articles of merchandise which these workmen are able to purchase, and to pay for, in consequence of the employment in which they are engaged. To show that what has been said of iron is also true of coal, let us look at the estimate of the cost of a ton of coal delivered at the seaboard.

I will give the following as the cost of delivering coal at Havre de Grace, from Wyoming.

|  |   |   |   |        |
|--|---|---|---|--------|
| Coal in mine a ton                             | - | - | - | 50     |
| Mining and placing in boats on canal           | - | - | - | 50     |
| Toll in round numbers                          | - | - | - | 70     |
| Transportation 3-5 of a cent. per ton per mile | - | - | - | - 1 20 |
| Contingencies                                  | - | - | - | - 20   |
|  |   |   |   | \$3 10 |

The following comparative statement will show the quantity of anthracite coal shipped from the different regions in 1842 and 1843:

|              | 1842.     | 1843.     |
|--------------|-----------|-----------|
| Schuylkill,  | 540,892   | 677,295   |
| Lehigh,      | 272,129   | 267,734   |
| Lackawana,   | 205,253   | 227,605   |
| Pinegrove,   | 32,281    | 22,905    |
| Shamokin,    | 10,000    | 10,000    |
| Wilkesbarre, | 47,346    | 58,000    |
|              | 1,108,001 | 1,263,539 |
|              |           | 1,108,001 |

|                                      |   |         |
|--------------------------------------|---|---------|
| Increase in the supply in 1843, tons | - | 155,538 |
| Add overstock April 1, 1843, -       | - | 50,000  |

Increase supply for 1843, tons - 205,538

The above statement relates only to the main anthracite regions, and does not include the operations in bituminous coal, which are nearly equal to the anthracite. These estimates will show also most conclusively that there is no danger of a failure to supply the demand at fair prices; the competition between the different regions will always insure the consumer against imposition. They prove, likewise, that the operators do not make unfair profits. In many cases the farmer cultivates the soil, and mines the coal under it merely for the purpose of giving employment to his laborers and teams in the winter, and consuming his surplus products, and turning the whole into money when he gets the coal to market.

The gentleman from Alabama [Mr. BELSER] complains that the southern planter does not realize more than from 6 to 8 per cent. on his investments. I can assure him that the citizens of Pennsylvania, who are equally industrious, would be well satisfied with such profits.

Some gentlemen seem anxious to guard the interests of the consumer. Now, sir, if they wish to do it effectually, as far as coal and iron are concerned, let them be careful how they put out the fires of our furnaces in Pennsylvania, as they did under the ruinous operations of the compromise—let them pause before they compel a suspension of our vast operations in coal, as was well nigh the case in 1842, when two hundred thousand tons of foreign coal were introduced. What would be the condition of the consumer of coal if our thousand miles of canals and railroads—more than forty of which are under ground—were to go into a state of decay, and our mines into dilapidation, as they will, if not constantly worked? Then the price will advance to what it was before we came into competition with the foreign trade. In 1842 the duty was \$1 26 cents; and even then two hundred thousand tons were imported. The bill before us proposes to reduce the tariff on coal to \$1 per ton, to make considerable reductions on all kinds of iron, and to make a special discrimination in favor of railroad iron.

The estimated indebtedness of the United States to England for iron alone, is more than \$40,000,000!

and that, while we have inexhaustible resources for its manufacture. If that amount had been manufactured here, it would have created a home market for something like \$20,000,000 worth of agricultural productions, and given employment to a large number of our citizens. But, in addition to the forty millions which we owe for iron, we have paid annually seven or eight millions for many years. If this whole amount had been manufactured at home, what an immense market would it have made! The iron manufactures, and the operations in coal in Pennsylvania, even now afford a better market for the flour and meat of the States, than all the European markets put together. The gentleman from Ohio [Mr. BRINKERHOFF] complains that the nine manufacturing States (as he calls them) only consume, in addition to their own agricultural productions, about 36,000,000 bushels of the grain of other States; or, in other words, that there is only a deficiency of 36,000,000 in the nine States. And pray sir, is not this market for thirty-six millions better than to have the nearly eight hundred thousand persons engaged now in manufactures, and annually producing in value nearly four hundred millions of dollars, thrown into competition with the three millions and a half of persons engaged in agriculture, and producing about seven hundred millions in value of agricultural productions?

But I wish to examine this interest in another view. I have heretofore shown that, in addition to the fact that the framers of the constitution and all our chief magistrates have recognised the importance of enabling all our manufactures to come into competition with the foreign producers; they had gone still further in reference to articles of absolute necessity in time of war. General Jackson, after laying down the general rule by which to be governed, says that the inducements for going still further are of a controlling influence in reference to articles of necessity for national defence. Coal and iron would come in for attention under the general rule. But, on this point, I deny that the duty on iron has exceeded the *revenue standard*, and the committee are not warranted in making the reduction which they propose, by the rule which they have themselves laid down for their action; and above all, there is no warrant in the doctrines of their own report for the discrimination in favor of railroad iron. But waiving this view for the present, I contend that iron has always been deemed an article of indispensable necessity in time of war; and that, since the application of steam in propelling steamers and ships of war, coal has also become indispensable.

I have heretofore said our navies, at no distant day, in my opinion, will be built of iron and propelled by steam. The following are some of the advantages of iron over wood in vessels of war. Lieutenant Hunter, commander of the United States steamer Union, gives the following advantages of an iron vessel over a wooden one of the same dimensions:

- 1st. Greater strength.
- 2d. Less weight, and consequently she may be propelled by the same power, whether wind or steam.
- 3d. She has more room inside for her crew and provisions.
- 4th. She cannot be burned.
- 5th. She will last for ever, and cost scarcely anything for repairs. This comparative indestructibility keeps her ever ready for sea, and exempts her from the great expense attendant upon the preservation of wooden vessels in ordinary, and the loss of time consumed in fitting the latter for sea.
- 6th. Her bulk-heads being water-tight, she may not be sunk, though one part of the vessel be pierced by shot.

7th. A Faixhan shell cannot lodge in her side.

8th. She has none of the vegetable matter of wooden vessels about her, which produces disease by decomposition.

9th. The utmost cleanliness of her berth-deck is indispensably necessary to the health of the crew. Hers being iron, may be washed at all times. Not so the wooden-decked vessels, where the dampness arising from the absorption in washing them is so great, that the medical officers attribute to it chiefly the size of their sick lists.

10th. The vessel being of iron, is ever tight, and costs nothing for caulking, except on her spar-deck, which should be of wood.

11th. She is free from vermin, so destructive to provisions and stores in the wooden vessels.

12. She will make a great saving in the article of paint; the iron surface being simply covered with it whilst the wooden surface is saturated. Many other advantages might be mentioned.

The use of ocean steamers is no longer an experiment. The result has been such as might have been anticipated. Spain, France, the States of Italy, Austria, Greece, Turkey, and Egypt, to say nothing of England, have all had their steamers since 1841.

The British, in addition to their regular lines visiting this country, had some time since a connexion of steam vessels of the best class, by lines, from Lisbon, Gibraltar, Malta, and Syria, with their India possessions. By the latest accounts I have seen, coming only down to 1841, the French had thirty-five, the Austrians twenty-two, Sardinia eighteen, Naples seven, Tuscany five, Spain nine, Greece four, Turkey eighteen, Egypt five, Russia on the Black sea ten, with an average of sixteen belonging to Great Britain—making a grand total of one hundred and forty-nine steam-ships commanded by the naval officers of their respective governments, although companies and individuals may be interested in the property of some of them. That anthracite coal is an excellent fuel for steamers, was tested in the case of the *Clarion*; and it is only to be regretted that we have not more steam vessels built of iron, in place of our wooden ships, costing so much annual repair.

But no one can much longer doubt that we shall be obliged to follow the example which England and France have set us. Iron steamers should be built for use as snag-boats on the Mississippi; and in case of necessity, they could be turned into *snags* to prevent the entrance of an enemy upon the waters of that noble stream. Then there will also be constructed iron canal boats. Some time since I saw the following article in a Rochester paper:

**IRON CANAL BOATS.**—We are pleased to learn that our enterprising boat-builders are about commencing the construction of iron canal boats. Some 15,000 pounds of iron arrived by railroad, in this city, a day or two ago, for Mr. Seth C. Jones, the well known boat-builder, who intends immediately to commence building an iron boat, which will weigh, when done, about eighteen or twenty tons, and be of sufficient capacity to carry 800 barrels of flour. An ordinary wooden boat weighs about thirty tons, and seldom carries over 500 barrels. The iron is of Pennsylvania manufacture, and is about a fourth of an inch thick. It came in plates five or six feet long, and two feet wide.

It has likewise been already used, to some considerable extent, in building houses, and in making fences: but I was considering it as connected with the subject of defences; for which purpose, in various branches of defence, there is no substitute. It is requisite, as I have said, for such steamers as we must provide to keep pace with other nations, and for the machinery which is to propel them; for the guns which are to defend our forts, and the carriages upon which they are to be mounted. And now, sir, having mentioned the subject of guns, allow me to say a few words about the importance of a national

foundry, as most intimately connected with the national defence and the propriety of sustaining our iron and coal operations to render us independent in times of war, and prosperous in times of peace.

The astounding acknowledgment is placed upon the records of our government, by a report from one of the departments, that, in case of a call into actual service, our gunners and seamen would be more fearful of our own cannon than the guns of the enemy! If this be true, we are unworthy to be the representatives of a free people if we do not do all in our power to obviate this most alarming deficiency. It has been found that the present method of obtaining cannon on contract, and testing them before use, affords no security; because they may be injured by the very test to which they are submitted, and will explode the first time they are subsequently discharged, the injury having been imperceptible. There is no safety except in the establishment of a national foundry, where they shall be manufactured for use instead of for sale.

The British Parliament investigate and develop every subject that can possibly have a national bearing.

The iron and coal of Pennsylvania, from their alternating in the same location, from their juxtaposition, and their facility of transportation to the seaboard, are unquestionably *national objects*, whether considered in reference to peace or war. Early in the present session, I introduced resolutions authorizing inquiries into the propriety of constructing the vessels hereafter to be built of iron, and calling on the Secretary of the Navy for the result of the experiments made, by his direction, testing the relative value of different kinds of fuel for generating steam. These resolutions were laid over, under the rule, because they gave rise to debate, and have not yet been reached in order. The motions submitted to take them up out of order have been unsuccessful. But these subjects shall not be lost sight of; they are of too much importance, not only to Pennsylvania, but to the nation. It has well been asked—

What would Great Britain be, deprived of her mines of coal and iron? What are the sources of her wealth that enabled her, during a long and disastrous war, to subsidize half Europe? Her coal and iron. What were the sources of her power that gave her strength to withstand Napoleon, and finally to subdue the conqueror of nations? What has given nerve to her arm, and furnished the means of war to subjugate India, and recently to break in upon the seclusion and repose of the Celestial Empire, and open her commerce to the world? Her coal and iron. These are the locks of her mighty strength.

A late number of the Westminster Review contains an interesting article on the coal trade of Great Britain, in the course of which some curious facts are stated. The writer remarks that, as an article of fuel, coal, from the abundance with which it can be obtained, and the peculiar qualities it possesses, (which render it the most economical and best adapted, both for domestic consumption, and for the purposes of manufacture, and the advancement of arts and sciences, hitherto discovered,) has become of such general and extensive use, that the trade in coal is now one of the staple trades of many parts of the United Kingdom.

But it may be said it does not follow, even admitting the importance of building an iron navy, that coal is a necessary article for national defence. It may be answered, that our ships should not only be built of iron, and provided with sails, but they should also be provided with the means of propulsion by steam. Wood cannot well be used as a

fuel, for many reasons: one is, on account of the smoke, which would advertise the approach of a vessel too long in advance for any adroit naval manœuvres. The same may be said of bituminous coal to some extent. The British steamers use this species of coal. But a letter-writer from Dover, England, writes to his correspondent somewhat after the following manner:

In a clear day we can count all the steamers that move on the French coast, and tell the direction in which they sail, even though we cannot see their hulls. The column of smoke ascending to the heavens tells us the number and their course.

This would give us, in the use of anthracite, a decided advantage; we could tell their number and their course at a distance of thirty or forty miles by their pillar of smoke, while we could move upon them unobserved, without a treacherous advertisement in the skies above our flag: besides, anthracite is less bulky, and requires less space.

A number of the Liverpool Albion contains an interesting paragraph in relation to iron vessels. The editor says:

We find that iron, as a material for shipbuilding, is fast gaining ground. For steamers, it has been a favorite for some time past; and there is not now one wooden steamer building at this port, while we observe there are two iron ones, of the first class, nearly completed, and, we understand, contracts are made for the building of three more.

Mr. Walsh, in his letter of June 30, 1843, Paris, to the editors of the National Intelligencer, says:

The Minister of Marine reminded the member, &c., and added that the law which authorized the eighteen steamers, in preparation, was peremptory, &c.

The Boston Journal says that

Many experiments have been carried on during several months upon the Birmingham and Liverpool Junction canal, under the superintendence of the company's skilful engineers, by which it is clearly proved that steam power can be safely and economically applied to boats of ordinary form upon narrow canals.

The Iron Queen, a British steamer of three hundred and fifty tons register, was, during the past year or two, transporting coal from Liverpool to Havana, and cotton from Mobile to Liverpool; loading again with salt for Galveston, in Texas, and returning with cotton; and, after two voyages, upon examination, she was found not to have strained a single rivet, notwithstanding she had encountered a heavy gale on the Galveston bar. Examples might be multiplied, to show the importance of coal and iron as articles requisite for national defence in time of war, and as the means of enriching the republic in periods of peace. But time will not permit any further notice.

It must be manifest, that if the present duties on these articles exceed the revenue standard, that excess is warranted by the application of the rule which has at all times been admitted in reference to articles of such undoubted importance in rendering us independent of foreign powers.

I desire to submit a few more remarks in reference to the proposition to admit railroad iron free of duty. The gentleman from Ohio, [Mr. BRINKERHOFF,] and also the gentleman from Indiana, [Mr. SMITH,] seem to favor the measure, on the supposition that we are not prepared to supply the demand, and will not afford it at a fair price. I have, sir, shown how the twenty anthracite furnaces are to supply the demand. Let us now examine this matter of prices. In England, in 1829, &c., &c., iron commanded only \$27 50 per ton. In 1832 the duties were remitted, and the price advanced to \$35;

and ranged from that to \$62 50 up to 1840. The prices are regulated at the quarterly meetings of the trade. It is said, however, the tariff will have but little effect on railroad iron, as it is not made here, and that the continent is the chief market for the English production. In answer to this, it has been shown that we are prepared to make it here; and it is well known the American importations are of vast consequence in the scale of nations, as appears by referring to an article of high authority, in the *Edinburg Review*, for August, 1843, in which the English writer undertakes to show "that the trade of Britain with America employs at least a twentieth part of the British population, and at least a tenth part of her commercial and manufacturing wealth;" and as the subject of tariffs is fully treated upon, it is well worthy of the consideration of the statesman, as he will perceive how much more protective both the English and French tariffs are than the American.

While in 1836, the entire export of iron and steel from England, to all parts of the world, was something more than two hundred thousand tons, of that amount the United States took more than ninety thousand. Strange as it may seem, notwithstanding our tariff, we have consumed more than one-third of her exports of iron, steel, hardware and cutlery.

Now what is the extent of her manufacture of railroad iron? and what amount has been consumed by our country? We find from the *English Mining Journal*, that the entire manufacture is estimated at 120,000 tons in 1840; and supposing that we have imported 250,000 tons in fourteen years, we must have given her, during the years 1837, 1838, 1839, and 1840, a demand for about one-third of her then production. For we find that the State of Pennsylvania alone, from 1832 to 1839—that is to say, in the space of seven years—introduced into that State alone 49,000 tons, costing three and a half millions of dollars. Since the first successful experiment in making iron from anthracite, which was made at Pottsville about four years ago, I have already said sixteen furnaces have been established in Pennsylvania, and four in New Jersey, and two more about to be erected at Phoenixville—the whole being capable of producing more than 60,000 tons annually; while our annual importations have not averaged more than about 12,000 tons heretofore.

From the foregoing considerations, it will be manifestly seen there can be no failure to supply the demand; and that the anthracite iron is suitable for the purpose, is proved by the report of Mr. D. Mushet, who says, after the most elaborate experiments:

From these and the former comparative experiments, it is abundantly evident, that the pig iron now making with cold blast and anthracite, at the *Ystalyfera* iron works, greatly exceeds in strength, in defective powers, and capacity to resist impact, any iron at this time manufactured in the kingdom.

The question then arises, whether the just expectations of those who have established these furnaces under the provisions of the present law, shall be crushed by its repeal, and by forcing their productions wholly into the general market, thereby bringing ruin upon all those engaged in the charcoal furnaces. This iron interest is by no means confined to Pennsylvania and New Jersey; it addresses itself to the consideration of the representatives of almost every State in the Union. I have already referred

to Tennessee; the following is from a publication in Georgia:

Among the resources of Georgia, now developing themselves, are her manufactures of cast and wrought iron, located in the mountain region. Several are now in operation, or springing into existence.

And the following from Missouri:

A vein of cannel coal about five inches thick has been discovered on the surface of the earth near St. Genevieve, Missouri. It is on the route to the famous Iron mountain, and it is supposed that large quantities will be found, and prove immensely valuable.

The inexhaustible stores of iron and coal spread throughout the vast expanse of this wide republic, will always prevent any danger of combinations among the domestic producers to demand unfair prices from the community. The present tariff may have lessened importations, and thereby given a more extensive home market to our producers, and thus operated to their advantage; but that it has not enhanced the prices, will appear from the following extracts from the commercial list of Mr. Childs:

Turn to August, 1841, and 1842, and February, 1844, and give us the prices of iron at the said dates respectively. I have it, sir; and answer as follows:

August 21, 1841—*Before the tariff.*

|                   |                         |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| English bar iron, | \$75 per ton to \$82 50 |
| American do       | 72 50 do 77 50          |
| Do do rolled,     | 75 do 82 50             |

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|                   |                         |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| English bar iron, | \$65 a \$67 50 per ton. |
| American do       | 72 50 a 75 do           |
| Do do rolled,     | 80 a 85 do              |

February 10, 1844—*Since the tariff.*

|                   |                      |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| English bar iron, | \$60 a \$65 per ton. |
| American do       | 70 a 75 do           |
| Do do rolled      | 65 a 70 do           |

The two former dates show the prices of iron prior to the commencement of the present tariff, and the latter date shows the price now, while the tariff is in full operation. The result is, that iron is cheaper now than it was before the present "heavy duty" was laid upon it!

While at the same time, as I have before said, it does not appear the duty transcends the fair revenue standard. We raise about the same amount of duty upon a less importation, leaving the additional demand to be supplied from our own resources, out of materials otherwise useless, and giving employment to our citizens not otherwise engaged, and increasing the home market for the products of those engaged in agriculture; and whatever gentlemen may say, it is manifest, from present appearances, that this home market must be our main reliance.

The agricultural papers of Great Britain say that,

in five years, owing to the great improvements now going on there in the culture of wheat, England will export flour. The imports there, the last two years, have averaged but 14,000,000 bushels, and an improved culture of only five per cent. will furnish all the home consumption.

The government have taken the matter in hand, and will encourage it by bounties. Should this prove true, what will become of the great flour market which the free trade advocates promise western farmers if they will adopt the policy of free trade? A home market is the only one that can be depended upon with any certainty, and it is the true policy to endeavor to increase it. Within the last year we have exported about \$10,000,000 of manufactured articles; and into these articles entered more of the agricultural products of the grain-growing States than the amount directly exported.

Suppose, by one system of raising revenue, you may apportion the burdens equally among all classes, and at the same time incidentally increase their means of bearing them; and by another, you would raise the same amount without benefiting any class, or without reference to our independence of other nations in peace or war: who could hesitate in the choice of methods? The burden of any system depends much upon the ability to pay. Whatever increases the ability lightens the burden.

One great objection to the bill under consideration is, that it does not appear, from the report of the committee, that they have any assurance it will produce sufficient revenue, or that the revenue under the present law will be insufficient. Indeed, the importations for the last quarter go to prove that there will be no deficiency. But while the present law is operating favorably upon all the general interests of the country, why change it, unless it can be shown it is producing either too much or too little revenue? And when it is admitted stability in all our operations, is a matter of almost paramount importance, why change at all for any slight and transient cause?

Do not trifle with the busy energies of a mighty people. Let well enough alone; the present law is producing active operations in all branches of business, and sufficient resources for the administration of the government. The rate of duties to which the bill on your table would return, after a trial, failed to do either. I, therefore, go against it, in obedience to the convictions of my own judgment, and the wishes of those whom I have the honor to represent.